

ABSTRACT

The present invention provides a technology for verifying the validity of an electronic document by using a signature affixed to the electronic document at the time of its creation even if the electronic document is partially rendered private at the time of its disclosure. An target electronic document is divided into two or more partial documents having an arbitrary or fixed length. This division is effected by using a tag of XML or other markup language so as to provide versatility or by adding a dedicated delimiter for division. The system has a signature function. The signature function uses a signature technique for generating the information for verifying the validity of each of the partial documents, and validating a signature affixed to the electronic document to confirm the validity of the whole electronic document by affixing a signature to the aggregate of the generated validity confirmation information.